TEXTUAL WANDERINGS: HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP AND THE WRITTEN LANDSCAPE OF STRABO'S *GEOGRAPHY*

Abstract: This article examines Strabo's attitude towards Homeric scholarship, textual emendation and the wanderings of mythical heroes. By exploring the interconnections between these themes, three broader aspects of the *Geography* are elucidated: the relationship between Homeric and historical truth and fiction, Strabo's self-fashioning as a consciously late Hellenistic scholar, and the significance of interpretations of past heroic wanderings as a means of exploring present geo-political concerns. The discussion focuses upon two particular case-studies: the travels of Jason and the Argonauts, and the wanderings of Aeneas. Ultimately through this examination Strabo emerges as a liminal figure who firmly straddles the divide between the worlds of past Hellenistic textual scholarship and Imperial Greek literature.

TEXTUAL WANDERINGS: HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP AND THE WRITTEN LANDSCAPE OF STRABO'S *GEOGRAPHY*

During the long description of the landscape of the Troad in the thirteenth book of Strabo's *Geography*, we find a famous report – the story of the fate of Aristotle's library (13.1.54) – which suddenly transports us from the town of Scepsis in Asia Minor to the world of contemporary Rome:

> ὁ γοῦν Ἀριστοτέλης τὴν ἑαυτοῦ Θεοφράστῳ παρέδωκεν, ᾧπερ καὶ τὴν σχολὴν ἀπέλιπε, πρῶτος ὧν ἴσμεν συναγαγὼν βιβλία καὶ διδάξας τοὺς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ βασιλέας βιβλιοθήκης σύνταξιν. Θεόφραστος δὲ Νηλεῖ παρέδωκεν, ὁ δ᾽ εἰς Σκῆψιν κομίσας τοῖς μετ᾽ αὐτὸν παρέδωκεν, ἰδιώταις ἀνθρώποις, οἳ κατάκλειστα εἶχον τὰ βιβλία, οὐδ᾽ ἐπιμελῶς κείμενα. ἐπειδὴ δ᾽ ἠσθοντο τὴν σπουδὴν τῶν Ἀτταλικῶν βασιλέων, ὑφ᾽ οἷς ἦν ἡ πόλις, ζητούντων βιβλία εἰς τὴν κατασκευὴν τῆς ἐν Περγάμῳ βιβλιοθήκης, κατὰ γῆς ἔκρυψαν ἐν διώρυγί τινι. ὑπὸ δὲ νοτίας καὶ σητῶν κακωθέντα ὀψέ ποτε ἀπέδοντο οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους Ἀπελλικῶντι τῷ Τηίῳ πολλῶν ἀργυρίων τά τε Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ τὰ τοῦ Θεοφράστου βιβλία. ἦν δὲ ὁ Ἀπελλικῶν φιλόβιβλος μᾶλλον ἢ φιλόσοφος· διὸ καὶ ζητῶν ἐπανόρθωσιν τῶν διαβρωμάτων εἰς ἀντίγραφα καινὰ μετήνεγκε τὴν γραφήν, ἀναπληρῶν οὐκ εὖ, καὶ ἐξέδωκεν ἁμαρτάδων πλήρη τὰ βιβλία. συνέβη δη τοῖς ἐκ τῶν Περιπάτων τοῖς μὲν πάλαι τοῖς

μετὰ Θεόφραστον οὐκ ἔχουσιν ὅλως τὰ βιβλία πλὴν ὀλίγων καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἐξωτερικῶν μηδὲν ἔχειν φιλοσοφεῖν πραγματικῶς, ἀλλὰ θέσεις ληκυθίζειν. τοῖς δ᾽ ὕστερον, ἀφ᾽ οὗ τὰ βιβλία ταῦτα προῆλθεν, ἄμεινον μὲν ἐκείνων φιλοσοφεῖν καὶ ἀριστοτελίζειν, ἀναγκάζεσθαι μέντοι τὰ πολλὰ εἰκοτολογεῖν διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν. πολὺ δὲ εἰς τοῦτο καὶ ἡ Ῥώμη προσελάβετο. εὐθὺς γὰρ μετὰ τὴν Ἀπελλικῶντος τελευτὴν Σύλλας ἦρε τὴν Ἀπελλικῶντος βιβλιοθήκην τὰς Ἀθήνας ἑλών· δεῦρο δὲ κομισθεῖσαν Τυραννίων τε ὁ γραμματικὸς διεχειρίσατο φιλαριστοτέλης ὤν θεραπεύσας τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς βιβλιοθήκης καὶ βιβλιοπῶλαί τινες γραφεῦσι φαύλοις χρώμενοι καὶ οὐκ ἀντιβάλλοντες, ὅπερ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων συμβαίνει τῶν εἰς πρᾶσιν γραφομένων βιβλίων καὶ ἐνθάδε καὶ ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ. περὶ μὲν οὖν τούτων ἀπόχρη.

Aristotle left his library to Theophrastus, to whom he also left his school. Theophrastus was the first, as far as I know, to gather books together and teach the Egyptian kings how to put together a library. He left the library to Neleus, who took it to Scepsis and left it to his descendants, who were non-experts: they kept the books shut up and inappropriately stored. And when they realised how enthusiastically the Attalid kings who controlled their city were searching for books for the preparation of the library at Pergamum, they hid their books in some sort of hole. Then later, when they had been ruined through damp and moths, the descendants sold the books of both Aristotle

> and Theophrastus to Apellicon of Teos for a huge sum of money. But Apellicon was a lover of books rather than a philosopher; for this reason he sought a restoration of the eaten-through parts and transferred the text over into a new copy – though he did not restore it well and published the books full of mistakes. So it happened then that the older Peripatetics who came after Theophrastus had none of the books at all except a few, mostly exoteric works, and were not able to do philosophy in a practical way, but only to declaim hollow commonplaces. From the time when the books mentioned re-appeared the later Peripatetics were better able to do philosophy and imitate Aristotle, though they were forced to infer things for the most part on account of the great number of mistakes. Rome also exacerbated this situation: immediately after Apellicon's death Sulla – who had taken Athens – made off to Rome with his library. Once it was there Tyrannion the grammarian, a lover of Aristotle, got hold of it by flattering the librarian. So did some booksellers who used inferior scribes and did not collate the texts – something which happens in the case of other books which have been copied for sale, both here in Rome and in Alexandria. But that's enough about these matters.[1]

As might be expected, this passage has spawned much recent scholarship (and scepticism) concerning both the question of the textual history of the *Corpus Aristotelicum* and the history of ancient libraries.[2] The placement of this report at this specific point in the *Geography* is very striking. Strabo integrates the story into his longer description of Palaescepsis and Scepsis (13.52-56), mentioning it in connection with Neleus, a pupil of Aristotle and Theophrastus who was one of Scepsis' most well-known citizens. Although the report involves multiple locations and various scholarly and political figures, it is significant that Strabo chooses to relate this

story while specifically discussing Scepsis, a settlement in the Troad not far from ancient Ilium, since this account about the perils of faulty textual emendation and its effects comes immediately after Strabo has discussed a similar instance of textual damage, this time relating to the text of the *Iliad*, rather than Aristotle's written works.

At 13.1.53, just before we reach this passage about the fate of Aristotle's library in 13.1.54, Strabo rejects several variant traditions concerning the wanderings of Aeneas after the Trojan War. He focuses especially on arguing against the emendation of a Homeric line which supports the tradition that Aeneas wandered to Rome after the Trojan War, rather than remaining in Ilium or elsewhere in the Troad. The reasons for Strabo's attitude towards this potential Homeric emendation are complex and touch upon his relationship to Homeric poetry and scholarship more widely. In order to examine Strabo's attitude in book thirteen, it is first necessary to establish the importance of the discussions of the wanderings of Homeric heroes in the *Geography* more broadly.[3]

I will first turn to the account of the wanderings of Jason and the Argonauts as a case-study of Strabo's technique, to establish precisely what was at stake in contemporary discussions of wandering heroes. We will see that the treatment of Jason in book one presents a particularly interesting case, since the Argonauts are crucial to Strabo's wider argument in the *Geography*, in that they not only provide a way of mapping and constructing specific aspects of Greek culture and identity by linking East and West, but also provide a means for the author to construct his own authorial voice as a Homeric scholar with an especially Pontic focus. I will then return to the discussion of Aeneas' potential wanderings and the story of the movement of Aristotle's library to examine why textual wanderings and faulty emendation are such a serious matter for Strabo. Although there are other examples of discussions of Homeric and heroic wanderings in the Strabo's work, I have chosen to focus upon these two particular case-studies because they both provide perhaps the clearest examples of the way in which

Strabo takes on the role of a consciously late-Hellenistic Homeric textual scholar in order to contribute to contemporary interpretations of past heroic wanderings which can be utilised as a means of exploring present geo-political concerns in the *Geography*. Moreover, as will become clear in the following discussion, in addition to demonstrating Strabo's complex attitude towards the interconnections between heroic wanderings, textual emendation and Homeric and geographical scholarship more broadly, these two case-studies also allow several broader aspects of the *Geography* as a whole to be opened up to scrutiny. These include the nature of Homeric, historical and geographical truth in the *Geography*, the strategies which Strabo uses to bolster the authority of his own scholarly authorial voice, and the nature of his work's depiction of the nature of Greek identity in an increasingly Roman world. Ultimately through this examination Strabo emerges as a liminal figure who firmly straddles the divide between the worlds of past Hellenistic textual scholarship and later Imperial Greek literature.[4]

1. ARGONAUTIC WANDERINGS: STRABO AND JASON

Strabo's seeming obsession with Homeric geography, particularly in book one of the *Geography*, has long been noted.[5] From the very opening lines of the work, Homer is not just a poet who happens to mention geographical locations, but is in fact the very first geographer proper, and therefore the archetypal model of the role Strabo is casting himself in.[6] The fact that Strabo's deep engagement with Homer is at its most intense at the very start of his work is extremely significant: in many ways book one, which focuses on establishing Homer's general knowledge of all areas of the *oikoumene* while introducing many of the scholarly commentators of the past whom Strabo will proceed to castigate, can be read as a programmatic beginning to Strabo's entire geographical project. It is therefore striking that within this general opening

discussion of Homer's geographical knowledge the wanderings of Jason and the Argonauts take on a curiously prominent role. Perhaps the most initially puzzling element of Strabo's focus on the Argonautic journey is his repeated and consistent insistence that the voyage of the Argo is as prominent and as obvious in the Homeric poems as Odysseus' wanderings are. Strabo begins to push this idea very early on in his work. At 1.1.10 the more obvious regions of the *oikoumene* which Homer clearly knows about are enumerated: they include all of the regions of the Mediterranean Sea, Libya, Egypt, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Lycia, Caria, and the Troad. But after these more obvious and expected areas Strabo goes on to insist that Homer is also well aware of the Propontis and the Pontus, including the land of Colchis and the places which were the limits of Jason's expedition (ὧν ἁπάντων μέμνηται, καὶ ἐφεξῆς τῶν περὶ τὴν Προποντίδα καὶ τοῦ Εὐξείνου μέχρι Κολχίδος καὶ τῆς Ἰάσονος στρατείας, 1.1.10).

Although Strabo takes it for granted that any mention of Jason in Homer implies that the poet must have known the details of all the lands around the Pontus, the claim that Homer knows of the outermost limits of Jason's journey and is therefore able to teach the reader about the lands in the far north-east of the *oikoumene* is difficult to uphold when the actual Homeric poems are examined more closely. That Homer had at least some knowledge of the Argonautic story has long been accepted. The main evidence for this is Circe's mention of Jason at *Odyssey* 12.69-72 when she tells Odysseus of the dangers he will face during his own *nostos*, warning him that only the Argo has ever managed to safely pass through the Planctae in the past:

οἵη δὴ κείνη γε παρέπλω ποντοπόρος νηῦς
Ἀργὼ πᾶσι μέλουσα, παρ' Αἰήταο πλέουσα·
καί νύ κε τὴν ἔνθ' ὦκα βάλεν μεγάλας ποτὶ πέτρας,

ἀλλ' Ἥρη παρέπεμψεν, ἐπεὶ φίλος ἦεν Ἰήσων.

> One seafaring ship alone sailed past, the Argo known to all, sailing from Aeetes. And the wave would have cast even that ship swiftly on the huge rocks, but Hera sent it through, since Jason was dear to her.

This is the only direct reference to the *Argonautica* in Homer, although there are a few scattered hints which point at further aspects of the story.[7] That Homer knew of Jason is not only accepted by modern scholarship, but seems to have been a view held by Homeric scholars in antiquity, as a scholion on the mention of Jason's Lemnian son Euneos at *Il.* 7.468 makes most explicit.[8] It is therefore not in doubt that the view that Homer knew of at least some aspects of the *Argonautica*, and perhaps used them to model elements of Odysseus' journey, was current in antiquity. Strabo's argument that this entails a detailed Homeric knowledge of Pontic geography is however an extension of this view which is not supported anywhere in the Homeric text.

Why, then, is Strabo so insistent on the point that Homer displays an obviously equal knowledge of and interest in the wanderings of Odysseus, Menelaus *and* Jason? This is a question that has attracted very little comment in modern scholarship: those it has struck as odd have either ignored the implications of Strabo's declaration or seen it as an indication of his supposed incompetence.[9] It is important, however, to examine precisely why Strabo so vehemently insists upon Homer's knowledge of the lands touched upon by the Argonautic wanderings, especially since he seems to be the only writer known from antiquity who argues for Homer's knowledge of the geography of this region in such a specific manner.[10] In fact, later in book one Strabo himself hints that the opposite view had been more frequently held by Hellenistic scholars, with Demetrius of Scepsis in particular maintaining that Homer knew

nothing at all about the Argo's journey to Phasis (φησι μηδ' εἰδέναι τὴν εἰς Φᾶσιν ἀποδημίαν τοῦ Ἰάσονος Ὅμηρον, 1.2.38). It is therefore doubly striking that Strabo is so insistent upon Homer's knowledge of the Pontic region.

There are strong hints in other sections of the *Geography* which point to the reasons for Strabo's forceful attachment to the position that Homer often speaks of the geography of the eastern half of the *oikoumene* through references to the *Argonautica*. The first thing to note is that Strabo had strong personal family connections to the Pontic region, as the discussion of Colchis at 11.2.18 emphasises: after mentioning Jason, he reveals that his mother's uncle became governor of Colchis at the behest of Mithridates Eupator.[11] It has also been noted that Strabo places himself very much in the intellectual circles of the Pontic area, with especially strong ties to his teacher Tyrannion the grammarian, who was also from this region.[12] For this reason, the refutation of Demetrius of Scepsis and the continued insistence upon Homer's knowledge of the Propontis seems to be a reflection of Strabo's personal concern for this region.[13]

This does not explain, however, why Strabo must make Greek knowledge of the Black Sea area date specifically back to Homer. The answer to this question demonstrates the way in which space and time are bound up together in the geographer's work. By insisting upon Homer's knowledge of this region, Strabo is able to maintain that this part of the world had in fact long been Greek, since Homeric knowledge means that the Greeks controlled this space, at least epistemologically, long before the Romans.[14] Moreover, as the following example of Strabo's discussion of signs of the Argonauts' visit to the Italian island of Aethalia in book five demonstrates, Jason's return journey through the space of the western half of the *oikoumene* is of special importance for Strabo in the *Geography* (5.2.6):

ἔστι δὲ κατὰ τὴν Αἰθαλίαν λιμὴν Ἀργῷος ἀπὸ τῆς Ἀργοῦς, ὥς φασιν. ἐκεῖσε γὰρ πλεῦσαι τὴν τῆς Κίρκης οἴκησιν ζητοῦντα τὸν Ἰάσονα, τῆς Μηδείας ἐθελούσης ἰδεῖν τὴν θεάν, καὶ δὴ καὶ τῶν ἀποστλεγγισμάτων παγέντων, ἃ ἐποίουν οἱ Ἀργοναῦται, διαμένειν ἔτι καὶ νῦν διαποικίλους τὰς ἐπὶ τῆς ἠιόνος ψήφους.

There is at Aethalia a "Portus Argous", named after the Argo. They say this because Jason sailed there when he was looking for Circe's home, since Medea wanted to see the goddess. More to the point, they say this because of the scatterings of the scrapings from the strigil which the Argonauts made: these became permanent hereafter and even now the pebbles on the beach are variegated all the way through.

Unlike other *nostoi*, the Argonautic wanderings alone uniquely link the eastern and western halves of the *oikoumene*, with the outward journey reaching Colchis in the east and the *nostos* encompassing the west, where supposed traces of the Argonautic journey, such as the name of the harbour on Aethalia and the variegated pebbles found on the shore, are traditionally located. For this reason the much-travelled Jason becomes a very useful figure in the *Geography* as a person who geographically and culturally links both East and West, and Homer's knowledge of the Argonautic wanderings around the *oikoumene* becomes the ultimate authorising stamp of authority for Strabo's insistence on the global reach of the Argonauts' travels. In the case of Jason, however, this is not the only reason for Strabo's insistence on Homer's knowledge of his travels, as the next section will demonstrate.

2. THE PONTUS AND THE POET: STRABO AND ἐξωκεανισμός

As well as demonstrating the importance of Jason as a figure who geographically and culturally links both East and West, Strabo's discussion of signs of the Argonauts' previous presence on Aethalia also points to another important aspect of his attitude towards the wanderings of mythical heroes and the Homeric text. Immediately following the claim that the shores of Aethalia contain pebbles which point to the Argonauts' previous presence, Strabo turns to a more general reflection on Homer's relationship to geographical and historical truth, while insisting once again on Homer's knowledge of Jason's wanderings and Pontic geography (5.2.6):

> αἱ δὲ τοιαῦται μυθοποιίαι τεκμήρια τῶν λεγομένων ὑφ᾽ ἡμῶν εἰσιν ὅτι οὐ πάντα Ὅμηρος αὐτὸς ἔπλαττεν, ἀλλ᾽ ἀκούων θρυλουμένων τῶν τοιούτων πολλῶν αὐτὸς προσετίθει μήκη διαστημάτων καὶ ἐκτοπισμῶν, καὶ καθάπερ τὸν Ὀδυσσέα εἰς τὸν Ὠκεανὸν ἐξέβαλε, παραπλησίως καὶ τὸν Ἰάσονα, γενομένης καὶ τούτῳ πλάνης τινὸς κἀκείνῳ, καθάπερ καὶ Μενελάῳ. περὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς Αἰθαλίας τοσαῦτα.
>
> Now these sorts of stories from myth are evidence of what I was saying before, that Homer himself was not accustomed to invent everything, but that after hearing many such tales harped on about repeatedly, he himself began to add to the lengths of distances and to the remoteness of places, and just as

> he cast out his Odysseus into the Ocean, he cast his Jason out about the same distance too, because a wandering had occurred in the life of that man too, just as it had also occurred in the life of Menelaus. So much, then, about Aethalia.

Strabo's insistence that Homer is not inventing everything in this passage refers back to his stance towards the poet's historical veracity in the discussion of the wanderings of the Argonauts in book one, where he prefaces the description of Jason's expedition at 1.2.10 with a discussion of Homer's poetic technique (1.2.9):

> ἅτε δὴ πρὸς τὸ παιδευτικὸν εἶδος τοὺς μύθους ἀναφέρων ὁ ποιητὴς ἐφρόντισε πολὺ μέρος τἀληθοῦς, 'ἐν δ᾽ ἐτίθει' καὶ ψεῦδος, τὸ μὲν ἀποδεχόμενος, τῷ δὲ δημαγωγῶν καὶ στρατηγῶν τὰ πλήθη. 'ὡς δ' ὅτε τις χρυσὸν περιχεύεται ἀργύρῳ ἀνήρ', οὕτως ἐκεῖνος ταῖς ἀληθέσι περιπετείαις προσετίθει μῦθον, ἡδύνων καὶ κοσμῶν τὴν φράσιν, πρὸς δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ τέλος τῷ ἱστορικῷ καὶ τῷ τὰ ὄντα λέγοντι βλέπων.
>
> Now since he referred to mythical stories for their educational content, the Poet gave great consideration to the matter of truth, "and he placed in it" [= *Il.* 18.541, 550, 561, 607] falsehood as well, approving of it for the sake of winning over and leading the masses. "And just as when some man pours gold upon silver" [= *Od.* 6.232; 23.159], in this way that man [*i.e. Homer*] added an element of fiction to real life events, sweetening and adorning his

> style, but with the same end in view as the historian and the person who says what has really happened.

Strabo here repeatedly cites various pertinent Homeric lines to support his overall argument that the Homeric text contains truthful and accurate geographical information, using the poet's own words to elucidate this claim in a way which comes strikingly close to the more general critical principle – often attributed to Aristarchus – of "explaining Homer from Homer" (Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν).[15] Strabo makes clever use of this critical principal by first citing the phrase "and he placed in it" (ἐν δ᾽ ἐτίθει) which appears repeatedly within the ekphrastic description of Achilles' Shield in *Iliad* 18, to describe Homer's strategic placement of an element of falsehood within his generally truthful geographical account. This phrase is particularly pertinent in relation to the idea that Homer has deliberately crafted his work in a specific way to please and guide his audience since in *Iliad* 18 these words function as a reminder of Hephaestus' act of crafting Achilles' armour, drawing repeated attention to the process of making by appearing again and again at the beginning of descriptions of several new elements on the Shield.[16] In this way, Strabo not only attempts to clarify the workings of Homer's artistic processes through a citation of his own words, but even goes so far as to draw an implicit parallel between the Shield of Achilles as an object of divine and awe-inspiring visual art and the poet's own verbal craft.[17] In fact, Strabo goes on to describe Homer's own craft once more through a Homeric image of craft when he emphasises his view of the mixture of truth and falsehood contained within the Homeric poems with a citation of a simile which is twice used in the *Odyssey* to compare Odysseus himself to a beautiful crafted object. The simile is first used when Odysseus is beautified by Athene just before approaching Nausicaa (6.232-5):

ὡς δ᾽ ὅτε τις χρυσὸν περιχεύεται ἀργύρῳ ἀνὴρ
ἴδρις, ὃν Ἥφαιστος δέδαεν καὶ Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
τέχνην παντοίην, χαρίεντα δὲ ἔργα τελείει,
ὣς ἄρα τῷ κατέχευε χάριν κεφαλῇ τε καὶ ὤμοις.

> And just as when some man pours gold upon silver, a skilful man whom Hephaestus and Pallas Athene have taught craft of all kinds, and he produces works full of grace, in this way then Athene poured grace over his head and shoulders.

Homer later repeats the same image later in the *Odyssey* when Athene beautifies and adorns Odysseus so that he can regain his previous appearance and be fully recognised by Penelope as her true husband (23.159-62). Once again, Homer's own art is clarified by Strabo through a reference to an image of craft, artifice and skill which is contained within the Homeric text itself.

In the *Geography*, however, it is not a work of visual art, but the historical truth at the core of Homeric poetry itself which is described as being beautified and adorned by Homer's skilful addition of fictional mythical elements, as Strabo emphasises once and for all later in 1.2.9 by stressing that Homer himself draws attention to the fact that storytelling involves a plausible mixture of truth and falsehood by quoting the description of Odysseus' Cretan Tales at *Odyssey* 19.203 (ἴσκε ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγων ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα) and suggesting that Odysseus' storytelling here is similar to that of Homer himself as he sweetens and adorns (ἡδύνων καὶ κοσμῶν τὴν φράσιν) the historical basis at the foundation of each of his mythical stories. According to Strabo's argument this truthful historical basis has always been

there at the heart of Homer's fictions, though occasionally his poetic elaborations render the historical truth of his work either more enjoyable or harder to understand. In this way Strabo makes it clear that it is this supposedly factual, historic basis underlying each example of Homer's poetic elaboration which makes the Homeric text crucially important for the discipline of geography.[18]

The point of the examination of Homer's poetic method at this moment becomes clear when we reach the discussion of Jason's wanderings in the next section, 1.2.10. Here the geographer begins to set out his own position in terms of one of the most prominent literary critical issues in Hellenistic scholarship concerning Homeric geography: "oceaning-out" (ἐξωκεανισμός). This was a term used to describe Homer's apparent tendency to locate his Odyssean fictions in the realm of Ocean as a means of allowing him to invent stories more easily, by removing Odysseus from the known geographical space of the Greek world. In other words, Ocean becomes a unique undefined space, freed from geographical and historical specificity, which specially permits poetic licence. According to this argument, then, as Homer moves the geographical location of Odysseus' travels further and further out into the realm of Ocean, away from the centre and towards the periphery of the world, the amount of invention involved proportionally increases, as does the fantastic nature of the stories told about Odysseus.[19]

Furthermore, Strabo's discussion of the Argonauts' journey and its relation to the concept of ἐξωκεανισμός allows him to lock horns with two previous Hellenistic scholars: first Eratosthenes of Cyrene (c. 276BCE - c. 194BCE), and then Demetrius of Scepsis (c. 205BCE - c. 130BCE). By correcting the errors of previous scholars concerning Jason and ἐξωκεανισμός more generally, Strabo achieves two significant things right at the outset of the *Geography*: he establishes himself as a significant Homeric authority, as well as immediately making his own views on the complex relationship between the geographical, the

historical and the fictional abundantly clear. This becomes most obvious as Strabo repeatedly uses Jason's wanderings to refute and modify the argument of Eratosthenes and his school that Homer transfers his more fantastic stories to the distant and geographically uncertain regions of Ocean in order to make them easier to lie about, rather than basing the wanderings of Odysseus in real world geographical locations, such as the western Mediterranean.[20] In the context of this debate Jason crucially provides Strabo with a figure who can surpass Odysseus in terms of the number of signs or traces (σήματα) left on the landscape in both the west *and* the east of the *oikoumene*, since Odysseus' travels are invariably located only in the west if they are mapped onto any real-world location at all. By declaring that Homer was aware of the Argonautic wanderings, Strabo can therefore argue through Jason that the poet had great knowledge of the geography of both the eastern and western halves of the *oikoumene*. As a result, Eratosthenes will have been wrong to deny Homer great learning and to say that his poetry is like the storytelling of an old woman who makes everything up as entertainment (ἐκεῖνα δ᾽ οὐκ ὀρθῶς, ἀφαιρούμενος αὐτὸν τὴν τοσαύτην πολυμάθειαν καὶ τὴν ποιητικὴν γραώδη μυθολογίαν ἀποφαίνων, ᾗ δέδοται πλάττειν, φησίν, ὃ ἂν αὐτῇ φαίνηται ψυχαγωγίας οἰκεῖον, 1.2.3), if Strabo can demonstrate that there are traces of the historical veracity of Jason's voyage at the heart of Homer's relocation of the mythical wanderings of heroes into the region of Ocean.[21]

For this reason, immediately after his discussion of the way in which Homer mythically embellishes the *historia* which forms the basis of his poetry, Strabo insists that Homer locates both Medea and Circe in the region of Ocean in the *Odyssey* (1.2.10):

> ὡσαύτως <δὲ> καὶ τοὺς Κόλχους εἰδὼς καὶ τὸν Ἰάσονος πλοῦν τὸν εἰς Αἶαν καὶ τὰ περὶ Κίρκης καὶ Μηδείας μυθευόμενα καὶ

ἱστορούμενα περὶ τῆς φαρμακείας καὶ τῆς ἄλλης ὁμοιοτροπίας συγγένειάν τε ἔπλασε τῶν οὕτως διῳκισμένων – τῆς μὲν ἐν τῷ μυχῷ τοῦ Πόντου, τῆς δ' ἐν τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ – καὶ ἐξωκεανισμὸν ἀμφοῖν, τάχα καὶ τοῦ Ἰάσονος μέχρι τῆς Ἰταλίας πλανηθέντος.

And in the same way, since he knew both about the Colchians and about the voyage of Jason to Aia and about the mythical stories and historical reports told about them concerning their use of drugs and similarity to each other, Homer invented the kinship between Circe and Medea too. For this reason, even though they lived far apart – Medea in the innermost part of the Pontus and Circe in Italy – he moved them both out into the region of Ocean (and perhaps Jason as well wandered as far as Italy).

In contrast to Eratosthenes, in Strabo's understanding of ἐξωκεανισμός both the mythical and historical exist hand in hand as the juxtaposition of "mythical stories and historical reports" (μυθευόμενα καὶ ἱστορούμενα) here makes clear, highlighting the manner in which Homer imparts to the reader true geographical knowledge about Jason's journey and even about the land of Colchis itself.

The value of Jason as a figure who can bridge East and West for Strabo again becomes clear. But Strabo goes even further in linking the Pontus both to Homeric geography and by extension to the western regions of Odysseus' supposed travels, by arguing that Homer actually modelled his entire conception of the geographically ambiguous area of Ocean on the more geographically specific region of the Pontus Euxinus (1.2.10):

ἁπλῶς δ' οἱ τότε τὸ πέλαγος τὸ Ποντικὸν ὥσπερ ἄλλον τινὰ Ὠκεανὸν ὑπελάμβανον καὶ τοὺς πλέοντας ἐκεῖσε ὁμοίως ἐκτοπίζειν ἐδόκουν ὥσπερ τοὺς ἔξω Στηλῶν ἐπὶ πολὺ προϊόντας· καὶ γὰρ μέγιστον τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς ἐνομίζετο, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο κατ' ἐξοχὴν ἰδίως Πόντον προσηγόρευον (ὡς 'ποιητὴν' Ὅμηρον). ἴσως οὖν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μετήνεγκε τὰ ἐκ τοῦ Πόντου πρὸς τὸν Ὠκεανὸν ὡς εὐπαράδεκτα διὰ τὴν κατέχουσαν δόξαν.

Generally men in the past thought of the Pontic Sea as another Ocean, and they regarded the men who sailed there as leaving normal bounds behind just like those who have advanced far beyond the Pillars of Heracles. And the Pontic Sea was regarded as the greatest sea of those in our part of the world, and for this reason in accordance with its pre-eminence they began to call this sea specifically "The Pontus" just as they call Homer "The Poet". And so perhaps for this reason also Homer transferred things found in the Pontus into the Ocean since it was acceptable on account of the prevailing opinion.

The strange sort of parallelism set up here between Homer and the Pontus might make us momentarily pause. The first thing to note is that Strabo argues not only that the Argonautic wanderings were known to Homer and that they became the models of Odysseus' journey, but even that the Pontus itself is Homer's model for Ocean (μετήνεγκε τὰ ἐκ τοῦ Πόντου πρὸς τὸν Ὠκεανὸν). Strabo is thus simultaneously proclaiming the primacy of his own view of ἐξωκεανισμός over that of Eratosthenes, whose opinion is based on the wanderings of Odysseus alone. Strabo links Homer, Pontus and Ocean even more spectacularly by arguing

that as the largest πόντος in the world the Pontus can be referred to precisely as "the Sea" of all seas in just the same way as Homer himself can be referred to simply as "the Poet" of all poets.

The parallelism conjured up here of an equivalence between Homer and the Pontus takes on a further significance when we realise that the image of Homer as Oceanus had already become a literary *topos* by the time Strabo proclaimed the priority of Pontus to Oceanus.[22] One of the most striking examples of the use of this image can be found in the work of Strabo's contemporary Dionysius of Halicarnassus. In his rhetorical treatise *De compositione verborum* (24) Dionysius compares Homer to Ocean, using the description of Ocean as the source of all the seas, rivers and springs at *Iliad* 21.195-7 (βαθυρρείταο ... Ὠκεανοῖο, | ἐξ οὗ περ πάντες ποταμοὶ καὶ πᾶσα θάλασσα | καὶ πᾶσαι κρῆναι καὶ φρείατα μακρὰ νάουσιν) to describe Homer's status as the fount and source of all other poetry. The parallelism between Homer and the Pontus in book one of the *Geography* thus invokes this well-known critical *topos*, radically challenging Ocean's place as the source of all other waters as well as recasting the critical notion of ἐξωκεανισμός by arguing that there is a mixture of truth and fiction at the heart of the Homeric poems.

In this way the reconfiguration of the conventional "Homer-as-Ocean" *topos* only adds to the force of the argument here by revealing a clever and deep engagement with the language and imagery of the Homeric criticism of both the past and the present. In his repeated discussions of the wanderings of the Argonauts Strabo thus establishes his own critical position as a Homeric scholar, particularly on the issue of the relative proportion of historical veracity and fiction in the Homeric poems. He also simultaneously manages to map out both the western and the eastern halves of the *oikoumene* as places which had been touched by Greek cultural contact from the earliest possible historical periods, and, more particularly, establishes the

claims of his own locality to historical and geographical importance by firmly connecting the Pontic region with Homeric space.

For Strabo, these connections are vital, and it is the ability to unpack and elucidate the wanderings of Homeric (or not so Homeric, as it turns out) heroes which guarantees the veracity and utility of his own geographical project. But the significance of the Homeric poems and the crucial core of supposed truth they contain concerning the wanderings of Greek heroic males for Strabo's mapping out of Hellenic cultural contact all over the *oikoumene* goes hand in hand with a related theme in the *Geography* as a whole: the potential dangers which the physical wanderings of texts themselves, and the words contained within them, might wreak upon the supposedly historical and truthful vision at the heart of Strabo's work.

3. AENEAS' NON-WANDERINGS: THE PERILS OF EMENDATION

As Strabo's attitude towards Jason's supposedly Homeric wanderings suggests, the specific details of mythic wanderings of the past are easily able to take on huge significance in relation to the geo-political concerns of the present. In the case of Jason's wanderings, this significance is partly related to Strabo's own personal circumstances and particular self-fashioning as a Homeric scholar with links to the eastern half of the *oikoumene*. In certain cases, however, Strabo's discussions of and around the interwoven concerns of Homeric scholarship, textual emendation, the wanderings of mythical heroes and the nature of Homeric and historical truth relate much more directly to the broader contemporary political landscape of Strabo's world, as the discussion of Aeneas' wanderings in book thirteen of the *Geography* demonstrates. In a much wider discussion of the geography of the Troad, Strabo turns at 13.1.53 to the question of how to interpret the proleptic hints of the Trojan hero's wanderings which the *Iliad* contains.

This discussion of Aeneas' wanderings occurs immediately before the tantalisingly detailed story of the movements of Aristotle's library to its present position in contemporary Rome at 13.1.54, cited in the introduction.[23] In the case of Aeneas' wanderings, it is not Eratosthenes of Cyrene, but Demetrius of Scepsis who becomes the main scholarly predecessor in need of correction.[24] As Strabo's discussion goes on to make clear, despite the many contemporary theories concerning Aeneas' post-war fate which make claims for various settlements founded by the Trojan and his descendants, he firmly argues that Aeneas did not wander, insisting instead that he remained in the Troad and settled with his descendants in Ilium itself, rather than in Italy – an issue which, of course, bears real contemporary political significance in an Augustan context.[25]

Strabo begins the discussion of Aeneas' lack of wanderings by mentioning Demetrius of Scepsis' view that Aeneas had settled in his home town after the fall of Troy (13.1.53):

> οἴεται δ᾽ ὁ Σκήψιος καὶ βασίλειον τοῦ Αἰνείου γεγονέναι τὴν Σκῆψιν, μέσην οὖσαν τῆς τε ὑπὸ τῷ Αἰνείᾳ καὶ Λυρνησσοῦ, εἰς ἣν φυγεῖν εἴρηται διωκόμενος ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως.
>
> Demetrius thinks that the palace of Aeneas was in Scepsis, since Scepsis is in the middle of the territory of Aeneas and Lyrnessus, into which it is said he fled while fleeing from Achilles.

The political significance of Aeneas' Latin wanderings and settlement in the Roman world has led some to argue that Demetrius' view here is explicitly anti-Roman.[26] But due to the fact that a community's cultural prestige could be bolstered by claims which linked the inhabitants of individual towns in the Troad to an explicitly Homeric heritage, it seems more likely that

Demetrius is more concerned here with maintaining the Homeric importance of his hometown in the face of rival claims put forth by the nearby town of Ilium, rather than with a more distant Roman threat to Scepsis' geo-political claims to Homeric significance.[27] Either way, it soon becomes clear that Strabo does not agree with Demetrius' claim here, nor with the many other possibilities commonly put forward as the final destination of Aeneas' wanderings which he goes on to list (13.1.53):

> καὶ οἱ μὲν οἰκῆσαι περὶ τὸν Μακεδονικὸν Ὄλυμπόν φασιν, οἱ δὲ περὶ Μαντίνειαν τῆς Ἀρκαδίας κτίσαι Καπύας ἀπὸ Κάπυος θέμενον τοὔνομα τῷ πολίσματι, οἱ δ᾽ εἰς Αἴγεσταν κατᾶραι τῆς Σικελίας σὺν Ἐλύμῳ Τρωὶ καὶ Ἔρυκα καὶ Λιλύβαιον κατασχεῖν καὶ ποταμοὺς περὶ Αἴγεσταν προσαγορεῦσαι Σκάμανδρον καὶ Σιμόεντα· ἔνθεν δ᾽ εἰς τὴν Λατίνην ἐλθόντα μεῖναι κατά τι λόγιον τὸ κελεῦον μένειν ὅπου ἂν τὴν τράπεζαν καταφάγῃ· συμβῆναι δὲ τῆς Λατίνης περὶ τὸ Λαουίνιον τοῦτο ἄρτου μεγάλου τεθέντος ἀντὶ τραπέζης κατὰ ἀπορίαν καὶ ἅμα ἀναλωθέντος τοῖς ἐπ᾽ αὐτῷ κρέασιν.
>
> Some say Aeneas lived near Macedonian Olympus, and some that he founded Capyae near Arcadian Mantineia, deriving the name of the town from Capys. Others say he took control of Eryx and Lilybaeum after he landed at Aegesta in Sicily with the Trojan Elymus, and that he called the rivers near Aegesta Scamander and Simoeis, and then remained in Latium in accordance with an oracle ordering him to stay wherever he ate up his table. And this happened

near Lavinium in Latium, when due to a lack of means a large loaf was put down instead of a table and eaten up together with the meats on it.

Strabo is not happy with any of these alternatives, instead insisting that only the oldest attested reading of the Homeric text will settle the matter fully (13.1.53):

Ὅμηρος μέντοι συνηγορεῖν οὐδετέροις ἔοικεν οὐδὲ τοῖς περὶ τῶν ἀρχηγετῶν τῆς Σκήψεως λεχθεῖσιν. ἐμφαίνει γὰρ μεμενηκότα τὸν Αἰνείαν ἐν τῇ Τροίᾳ καὶ διαδεδεγμένον τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ παραδεδωκότα παισὶ παίδων τὴν διαδοχὴν αὐτῆς, ἠφανισμένου τοῦ τῶν Πριαμιδῶν γένους·

ἤδη γὰρ Πριάμου γενεὴν ἤχθηρε Κρονίων·
νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνείαο βίη Τρώεσσιν ἀνάξει
καὶ παίδων παῖδες, τοί κεν μετόπισθε γένωνται

Homer, however, seems to agree with neither story, nor with the things said about the founders of Scepsis. Instead he shows clearly that Aeneas remained in Troy and was successor to the sovereignty and bequeathed the succession to his children's children, since the descendants of Priam had been destroyed: "For already the son of Cronus has come to hate the race of Priam, but now the might of Aeneas will rule over the Trojans and the children of his children, those who will in time be born" [*Il.* 20.306-8].

Strabo here uses *Il*. 20.306-8 to refute the claims of other scholars regarding Aeneas' wanderings, instead maintaining that the hero ruled over the remnants of the Trojans in Ilium, rather than in Scepsis or Italy. Sticking closely to the Homeric text here maintains Homer's authority and ensures that the Troad, and Ilium in particular, remain intact as places with particular claims to Homeric memory. For this reason, it is vitally important for Strabo that Homer's text is respected and transmitted correctly, since the fundamental truth of the core of *historia* preserved at the base of the mythical additions to the Homeric text is of the utmost value in allowing contemporary Greeks to form their present local identities through claims to the Homeric past.

This becomes even clearer when Strabo goes on to confirm that it is the risk of distortion of the truth of the Homeric poems which he is primarily concerned with as he reiterates the authority of Homer by specifically refuting the idea that Aeneas wandered as far as Italy (13.1.53):

> πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον τοῖς ἑτέροις διαφωνεῖ τοῖς μέχρι καὶ Ἰταλίας αὐτοῦ τὴν πλάνην λέγουσι καὶ αὐτόθι ποιοῦσι τὴν καταστροφὴν τοῦ βίου, (τινὲς δὲ γράφουσιν 'Αἰνείαο γένος πάντεσσιν ἀνάξει | καὶ παῖδες παίδων' τοὺς Ῥωμαίους λέγοντες).
>
> And Homer is in by far greater disagreement with the others who say that Aeneas' wandering went as far as Italy and who make him end his life there. But some write: "the race of Aeneas will rule over everyone, and the children of his children" – meaning the Romans.

The emendation mentioned here is also found in an A scholion on *Il*. 20.307, suggesting that it was well known in antiquity.[28] It is striking that immediately after raising this specific textual emendation – an emendation which only *some* commentators adopt (τινὲς δὲ γράφουσιν), but one which has startling ramifications in terms of linking the Homeric past even more strongly to the geo-political realities of the contemporary *oikoumene* – Strabo moves directly to the discussion of the reasons for the emendation of the damaged texts of Aristotle's library which eventually found their own way to Rome.

The juxtaposition of the mention of this crucially emended Iliadic line with the story of the textual desecration of Aristotle's library, a passage which vividly exemplifies the potentially catastrophic effects on the integrity of a text which both the physical wandering of the book-roll itself and its subsequent faulty emendation cause, outlines the risks which damaged texts pose to Strabo's vision of geographical and historical truth. It is no surprise, then, that elsewhere in the *Geography* we see that Strabo's views concerning Homeric emendation in general are consistently negative. For example, in book one, again in the context of a heroic wandering, Strabo condemns Zeno's attempt to solve a notorious Homeric crux: the identification of the unknown people Menelaus calls Erembi while reiterating his travels at *Od*. 4.84 (Αἰθίοπάς θ' ἱκόμην καὶ Σιδονίους καὶ Ἐρεμβοὺς). Zeno emends the mysterious "Erembi" (Ἐρεμβούς) to the more familiar "Arabians" (Ἄραβάς) to solve the mystery, but Strabo is adamant in this case that the Homeric text need not be emended at all (1.2.34):

> τὴν μὲν οὖν γραφὴν οὐκ ἀνάγκη κινεῖν παλαιὰν οὖσαν, αἰτιᾶσθαι δὲ βέλτιον τὴν τοῦ ὀνόματος μετάπτωσιν, πολλὴν καὶ ἐπιπολαίαν οὖσαν ἐν πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν.

> And so it is not necessary to change the reading, since it is ancient. It is better for a change of name to be blamed, since name changes are frequent and commonplace among all peoples.

For Strabo then it is the very weight of the tradition of the old reading which means it must be maintained, while the present scholarly confusion can easily be blamed on a later change of name in the period after Homer. The negative view of any potential Homeric emendation is here made very clear, presumably because the risk of distorting the historical truth which lies at the heart of Homeric poetry renders any potential emendation a risky process.

Elsewhere in the *Geography*, Strabo's disapproval of the emendation of the ancient text of Homer as a response to confusion over the naming and identification of little-known peoples and locations is equally apparent. For example, Posidonius attracts censure in book seven for changing the name of the Mysians at *Iliad* 13.5 (Μυσῶν τ᾽ ἀγχεμάχων καὶ ἀγαυῶν Ἱππημολγῶν) to Moesians, with Strabo once again arguing that there is no need to change a reading that has been esteemed for so many years when a later name change can clearly be blamed for any later confusion over Mysian identity (τὸ μὲν οὖν τὴν γραφὴν κινεῖν ἐκ τοσούτων ἐτῶν εὐδοκιμήσασαν περιττὸν ἴσως· πολὺ γὰρ πιθανώτερον ὠνομάσθαι μὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς Μυσούς, μετωνομάσθαι δὲ †καὶ νῦν τοὺς†, 7.3.4). In the same way at 12.3.20-5, the prolonged discussion of the identity and location of the Homeric Halizones (extremely obscure Trojan allies mentioned only at *Iliad* 2.856 and 5.39) demonstrates a similarly strong distaste for disturbing the stable landscape of Homer's text. Ephorus in particular is condemned for "falling into another fiction" (εἰς ἄλλο ἐμπέπτωκε πλάσμα, 12.3.22) by changing the Homeric text, and is then chastised for giving free play to his imagination by changing the reading contrary to the trustworthy evidence provided by the

ancient manuscripts (καὶ ἡ μεταγραφὴ δὲ παρὰ τὴν τῶν ἀντιγράφων τῶν ἀρχαίων πίστιν καινοτομουμένη ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον σχεδιασμῷ ἔοικεν, 12.3.22); Menecrates and Palaephatus are similarly at fault for "moving" the text to solve this Homeric crux (τὴν ἀρχαίαν γραφὴν καὶ τούτους κινεῖν, 12.3.22).[29] In the same way, the juxtaposition of the story of Aristotle's library with the discussion of Aeneas' wanderings makes clear Strabo's overriding concern with textual (and especially Homeric) stability and authority and exemplifies the danger of the corruption of past knowledge through the physical corruption or emendation of Homeric texts.

4. STRABO'S PLACE IN THE TRADITION OF HELLENISTIC HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP

The story of Aristotle's library at 13.1.54 bears another further significance which merits brief consideration in the context of Strabo's wider authorial positioning in the *Geography* as a whole. Once the library reaches Rome it transpires that Strabo himself can be linked to Hellenistic traditions of textual scholarship through the eventual connection of the corrupted Aristotelian texts to his teacher Tyrannion. Since Strabo suggests that Tyrannion's copies of the Aristotelian text are less corrupt than others in existence which were made by inferior scribes and not confirmed through collation (γραφεῦσι φαύλοις χρώμενοι καὶ οὐκ ἀντιβάλλοντες, 13.1.54), this passage has been read as an attempt to bolster the geographer's own scholarly authority through his personal connection to Tyrannion.[30] Furthermore, the suspicion that Strabo's own scholarly authority is at stake in the passage about the textual corruption of Aristotle's library is strengthened by the transition from the end of the story about

the various men associated with the transmission of Aristotle's texts to the immediate mention of Demetrius of Scepsis again at the very beginning of the next section, 13.1.55:

> ἐκ δὲ τῆς Σκήψεως καὶ ὁ Δημήτριός ἐστιν, οὗ μεμνήμεθα πολλάκις, ὁ τὸν Τρωικὸν διάκοσμον ἐξηγησάμενος γραμματικός, κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον γεγονὼς Κράτητι καὶ Ἀριστάρχῳ.
>
> From Scepsis Demetrius, whom I recall often, also came. He was the grammarian who wrote a commentary, [called] *Trojan Battle Order*, and was of the same generation as Crates and Aristarchus.

The mention of Demetrius here provides a sort of ring composition to Strabo's treatment of Scepsis. As mentioned above, the beginning of the discussion of the settlement starts (13.1.53) with the refutation of Demetrius' claim that Aeneas and his descendants settled in his home town. Strabo thus hints at his own superior credentials as a Homeric scholar here by reminding the reader of Demetrius and his close relationship to the traditions of Homeric scholarship after he has already refuted his predecessor's suggestions regarding the interpretation of Aeneas' wanderings within the Homeric poems. In fact, Strabo has managed (in his own view) to surpass Demetrius' scholarship on Homer despite the fact that the latter is an acclaimed expert on the Trojan aspects of the *Iliad* – as exemplified by the mention of his most famous work here, the *Trojan Battle Order* (Τρωικὸς διάκοσμος), a commentary in thirty books on the Trojan part of the Catalogue of Ships at *Iliad* 2.816-77.[31] Strabo seems to be saying here that he is more than a match for this great Homeric scholar of the past, who as it turns out is far from infallible on matters relating to Homeric wandering in particular – or so Strabo is keen for us to believe.

Furthermore, the question of the location of the wanderings and settlement of Aeneas and his descendants is a particularly good interpretative problem for Strabo to focus on in order to bolster his own scholarly authority as an exegete of Homer, since this issue had been a crux in Hellenistic Homeric scholarship long before the seemingly ever-increasing power of Rome began to complicate the issue of the travels and settlement of the Trojan and his progeny even further.[32] Strabo's discussion of this textual crux therefore links him to famous scholarly predecessors before the story of the wanderings of Aristotle's library – a story which traces a scholarly line of descent all the way from Aristotle to Tyrannion and then, by implication, to Strabo himself – dramatises in its most vivid form the dangers of the corruption of the learning of the past.

By examining the wanderings of Jason and Aeneas as two case-studies of Strabo's broader treatment of heroic wanderings in the *Geography*, it becomes clear that discussing the specific details of even the most obscure Homeric wanderings is not an idle philological game in the *Geography*, but something which carries real cultural and increasing potential political importance in the Greek world from at least the Hellenistic age onwards. The unique ability of Homeric wanderings to link past and present, East and West, means that Strabo's discussions of the traces of heroic wanderings on the contemporary landscape are inevitably connected to broader themes concerning the position of Greek culture under Roman power as well as Strabo's own authority as a scholar and a geographer. This is also inextricably linked to Strabo's view of the nature of Homeric truth and fiction and its connection to the truth and factual nature of the discipline of geography itself. In his stance towards Homeric wanderings Strabo can thus be seen as a liminal figure between the past world of Hellenistic scholarship and the renewed and intense focus on Homer's cultural power which later becomes increasingly apparent in the literature of the Second Sophistic.[33]

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[1] All translations are my own. Text is from the edition of Radt (2002-2005).

[2] On this passage and the question of the history and transmission of Aristotelian texts see e.g. Barnes 1997, 1-69; Lindsay 1997, 292; Tanner 2000, 79-91; Pajón Leyra 2013, 723-33. For the use of this passage as an important source which tells us about the history of ancient libraries and scholarship see e.g. Too 2010, 29-30 and Jacob 2013, 66-74.

[3] On wanderings, geography and identity in Homer see Malkin 1998, 62-93; Dougherty 2001, 7 and Montiglio 2005, 125. On similar themes in Apollonius Rhodius see Thalmann 2011, 30-3 on Apollonius' use of the signs (σήματα) which the wandering Argonauts left on the landscape as a means of discussing space.

[4] As will become clear, my view of Strabo's position as a post-Hellenistic Homeric scholar thus accords with Kim's (2010, 14) view of the geographer as a "transitional figure" between the Greek literature of the late Hellenistic world and the Second Sophistic; see also Hunter 2009, 45 on aspects of Dio Chrysostom's *Trojan Oration* which can be seen as in some ways anticipated by the critical discussion of Homer in Strabo.

[5] Many have disparaged Strabo's dogged and prolonged defence of the poet's supposed knowledge of all corners of the *oikoumene*, regarding the insistent polemic regarding obscure points relating to often well-known Homeric problems (ζητήματα) as mostly irrelevant to the work's real geographical purpose. In particular, for criticism of Strabo's lack of "critical spirit" regarding Homer, see e.g. Aujac 1966, 20, Schenkeveld 1976, 64 and Biraschi 2005, 79. More recently, the prevalence of Homer in the *Geography* has increasingly been viewed more charitably, as a result of a combination of the author's philosophical leanings, scholarly training, and immersion in the intellectual culture of the Greek East: see e.g. Hartog 2001, 171; Pothecary 2005, 6; Kim 2007, 363-88 and 2010, 47-84; Lightfoot 2017, 251-62. On the general

growth of geography as a discipline alongside Homeric criticism in antiquity, see Prontera 1993, 387-97.

[6] See the opening of the *Geography* (1.1.1), where it becomes clear that Strabo was not the first to argue that geography as a discipline began with Homer, since he attributes this view to Eratosthenes as well: "I think that geography – the discipline which I have now proposed to examine – is an object of study for the philosopher, just as other disciplines are. And I think this is not a trivial point: it is clear for many reasons. For the first men who dared to begin to engage with geography were men such as Homer and Anaximander the Milesian and his fellow citizen Hecataeus, as Eratosthenes has said" (τῆς τοῦ φιλοσόφου πραγματείας εἶναι νομίζομεν, εἴπερ ἄλλην τινά, καὶ τὴν γεωγραφικήν, ἣν νῦν προηρήμεθα ἐπισκοπεῖν. ὅτι δ᾽οὐ φαύλως νομίζομεν, ἐκ πολλῶν δῆλον. οἵ τε γὰρ πρῶτοι θαρρήσαντες αὐτῆς ἅψασθαι τοιοῦτοι τινες ὑπῆρξαν, Ὅμηρός τε καὶ Ἀναξίμανδρος ὁ Μιλήσιος καὶ Ἑκαταῖος ὁ πολίτης αὐτοῦ, καθὼς καὶ Ἐρατοσθένης φησί). Cf. also *Geography* 1.1.2: "… Homer is the founder of the discipline of geography" (… ἀρχηγέτην εἶναι τῆς γεωγραφικῆς ἐμπειρίας Ὅμηρον).

[7] Other oblique references to the *Argonautica*: *Il*. 7.468-9 and 21.40-1 (Jason's Lemnian son Euneos); *Od*. 10.135-7 (Circe said to be the sister of Aeetes); *Od*. 11.235-59 (Tyro said to be the mother of Aeson).

[8] See Σ T ad. *Il*. 7.468: Ἰησονίδης Εὔνηος: ὅτι καὶ τὰ Ἀργοναυτικὰ οἶδεν (Euneos son of Jason: because he [Homer] knew the *Argonautica* as well). For modern discussions about the Homeric poet's knowledge of the Argonautic story see especially Meuli, 1921. Cf. also Heubeck 1989, 121; Hunter 1989, 14; Rutherford 1996, 6; West 2005, 39; Radt, 2006, 141.

[9] For example, Thomson 1948, 22-3 claims that the attitude towards Colchis in the *Geography* is an example of Strabo's perversity; Aujac and Lasserre 1969, 21 note that consistently linking Homer with the Argonautic wanderings is somewhat strange; Schenkeveld 1976, 53 does not question Strabo's joint presentation of the wanderings of Odysseus, Menelaus and Jason as equally prominent in Homer.

[10] See Dräger 1996, 30.

[11] *Geography* 11.2.18: "For the myths, hinting that Jason's expedition advanced as far as Media, and that Phrixus' expedition did so before him, make clear the extent of the fame which this region held in the past. After these events kings took control of the region, which was divided into military commands: these fared indifferently. But when Mithridates Eupator greatly increased his power, the region fell to him, and he was always accustomed to send one of his friends as sub-commander and governor of the region. One such man was Moaphernes, the paternal uncle of my mother" (τὸ μὲν γὰρ παλαιὸν ὅσην ἐπιφάνειαν ἔσχεν ἡ χώρα αὕτη δηλοῦσιν οἱ μῦθοι τὴν Ἰάσονος στρατείαν αἰνιττόμενοι προελθόντος μέχρι καὶ Μηδίας, ἔτι δὲ πρότερον τὴν Φρίξου. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα διαδεξάμενοι βασιλεῖς εἰς σκηπτουχίας διῃρημένην ἔχοντες τὴν χώραν μέσως ἔπραττον. αὐξηθέντος δὲ ἐπὶ πολὺ Μιθριδάτου τοῦ Εὐπάτορος εἰς ἐκεῖνον ἡ χώρα περιέστη, ἐπέμπετο δ' ἀεί τις τῶν φίλων ὕπαρχος καὶ διοικητὴς τῆς χώρας τούτων δὲ ἦν καὶ Μοαφέρνης ὁ τῆς μητρὸς ἡμῶν θεῖος πρὸς πατρός).

[12] See Dueck 2000, 9. Cf. Clarke 1997, 109 and Clarke 1999, 243 on the alignment of the authorial persona in the *Geography* with the contemporary intellectual circles of the Greek East. See also Pothecary 2011, 42 on the deliberate chronological overlap created between Strabo and these figures from the scholarly past such as Tyrannion.

[13] Cf. Shahar 2004, 20 and Braund 2005, 225.

[14] Cf. Hartog 2001, 171 on Polybius' insistence on Homer's knowledge of the world's limits for similar reasons.

[15] This formulation is attributed to Aristarchus by Porphyry in his *Homeric Questions* (Schrader 1880, 297.16); cf. also Σ D ad. *Il.* 5.385. Pfeiffer (1968, 225-7) is not in favour of a genuine Aristarchean provenance for this critical principle; Porter (1992, 70-4), however, argues persuasively and at length in favour. See also Nünlist 2015, 385-403, Schironi 2012, 436-7 and Schironi 2018, 75 n. 47, 220-1, 736-7. Certainly by the time of Galen the idea of explaining an author out of himself (this time Hippocrates, not Homer) had become a critical *topos*: see e.g. *De puls. dign.* 4.3 (8.958 K): "For I also have this rule of interpretation, to clarify each writer out of his own work and not to talk nonsense about whatever one wants with empty conjectures and unproven statements" (καὶ γάρ μοι καὶ νόμος οὗτος ἐξηγήσεως, ἕκαστον τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ σαφηνίζεσθαι καὶ μὴ κεναῖς ὑπονοίαις καὶ φάσεσιν ἀναποδείκτοις ἀπολῃρεῖν, ὅ τι τις βούλεται); cf. *De comate sec. Hipp.* 1.5 (7.646 K): "For it was necessary to create an interpretation of the style of Hippocrates out of the author himself, so that I might be able not only to report what he said faithfully, but also his meaning" (ἐχρῆν γὰρ ἐξ Ἱπποκράτους αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐξήγησιν ποιεῖσθαι τῆς λέξεως, ἵνα μὴ μόνον ὅτι πιθανῶς εἴρηται λέγειν ἔχωμεν, ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ κατὰ τὴν ἐκείνου γνώμην). On this principle in Galen, see further von Staden 2002, 115-16. Cf. also Porter 2016, 363 on Strabo's contemporary Dionysius of Halicarnassus and the way in which the imagery he uses to describe Homer's work often comes from Homer himself in a style which is reminiscent of the Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου principle.

[16] The phrase first appears in relation to Hephaestus' depiction on the Shield of a field being ploughed at *Il*. 18.541: ἐν δ᾽ ἐτίθει νειὸν μαλακήν, πίειραν ἄρουραν (and he placed on it soft fallow-land, rich land); then at 18.550: ἐν δ᾽ ἐτίθει τέμενος βασιλήιον (and he placed

on it a royal estate); at 18.561: ἐν δὲ τίθει σταφυλῇσι μέγα βρίθουσαν ἀλωὴν (and he placed on it a vineyard weighed down heavily with bunches of grapes); and finally at 18.607: ἐν δὲ τίθει ποταμοῖο μέγα σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο (and he placed on it the great force of the river Oceanus).

[17] For another possible reference to the view that ekphrastic objects reflect the poet's own verbal craft in antiquity see Σ bT ad. *Il.* 3.126-7 on the depiction of the battles of Trojans and Achaeans on Helen's tapestry: "The poet has fashioned a worthy model of his own craft" (ἀξιόχρεων ἀρχέτυπον ἀνέπλασεν ὁ ποιητὴς τῆς ἰδίας ποιήσεως). For discussion of this comment see Becker 1995, 55.

[18] On the importance of Strabo's insistence on the historical basis of Homeric geography, cf. Aujac and Lasserre 1969, 22; Meijering 1987, 61; Bréchet 2010, 56; Kim 2010, 71; Lightfoot 2017, 256-7.

[19] On the concept of ἐξωκεανισμός, see Romm 1992, 187; Buonajuto 1996, 8; Lightfoot, 2017, 258-9; see also Bréchet 2010, 57 and Porter 2011, 1-36 on the potential spatial mapping of Homeric fictions as a hermeneutic model more generally.

[20] Strabo epitomises these arguments when he reports Eratosthenes' notorious dictum: "one might find the location of Odysseus' wanderings when one finds the cobbler who sewed up the bag of winds" (ἂν εὑρεῖν τινα ποῦ Ὀδυσσεὺς πεπλάνηται, ὅταν εὕρῃ τὸν σκυτέα τὸν συρράψαντα τὸν τῶν ἀνέμων ἀσκόν, *Geography* 1.2.15).

[21] Cf. the later assertion at 1.2.17 that Eratosthenes is also wrong to suggest that *historia* should not be sought in poetry because making the content of poems up completely is both implausible and un-Homeric: τὸ δὲ πάντα πλάττειν οὐ πιθανόν οὐδ᾽ Ὁμηρικόν· τὴν γὰρ ἐκείνου ποίησιν φιλοσόφημα πάντας νομίζειν, οὐχ ὡς Ἐρατοσθένης φησί κελεύων μὴ κρίνειν πρὸς τὴν διάνοιαν τὰ ποιήματα μηδ᾽ ἱστορίαν ἀπ᾽ αὐτῶν ζητεῖν ("But

inventing everything is neither plausible nor Homeric. For everyone thinks that the poetry of that man is a subject of philosophical inquiry, and not as Eratosthenes says when he orders us not to interpret the poems with regards to their thought, nor to seek historical information from them").

[22] On the image of Homer-as-Ocean, see e.g. Brink 1972, 553-6; Williams 1978, 98-9; Morgan 1999, 32-9; Porter 2016, 362-3 and Hunter 2018, 2-4.

[23] Only Schubert 2002, 225-37 seems to suggest that the passage concerning Aeneas might be relevant for the story of the report about Aristotle's library, though he is concerned with what a reading of the two passages says about Strabo's relationship to the Peripatetic school rather than what it suggests about Strabo as a Homeric scholar, a theme which I will draw out in this section.

[24] See Leaf 1918, 31 n.1 on Strabo's dependence on Demetrius and generally positive attitude towards the Scepsian, with the exception of the unusually virulent criticism levelled at him on the issue of Aeneas' wanderings and eventual settlement. On Strabo's relationship with prominent Homeric commentators of the past, including Demetrius of Scepsis, see Trachsel 2017, 263-75.

[25] On this matter in Strabo in particular, see Biraschi 2000, 66 and Biraschi 2005, 81.

[26] See e.g. Gabba 2003, 146.

[27] Cf. Franco 2000, 277; Erskine 2001, 106-7; Trachsel 2007, 203.

[28] Σ A ad. *Il*. 20.307: "Some people mark this with a sign with reference to the historical information, and then some people emend it to 'the race of Aeneas will rule over everyone', as if the poet foretold the rule of the Romans" (σημειοῦνταί τινες πρὸς τὴν ἱστορίαν, καὶ ἐπεὶ μεταγράφουσί τινες 'Αἰνείω γενεὴ πάντεσσιν ἀνάξει', ὡς προθεσπίζοντος τοῦ ποιητοῦ τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἀρχήν).

[29] For an excellent analysis of the reasons why Strabo is so keen to reject the identification of the Halizones with anybody except the Chalybes (again relating to his emphasis on the past and contemporary geo-political importance of his home Pontic region) see Dan 2012-2013, 33-72. See also Trachsel 2017, 265-7 on this Homeric textual question and for examples of other similar Homeric textual problems in Strabo.

[30] See Lindsay 1997, 298 and Schubert 2002, 233-7. For Tyrannion's role in spreading the work of Alexandrian scholarship in Rome see Dickey 2007, 7.

[31] As Strabo himself describes the work at *Geography* 13.1.45: "… he wrote thirty books of commentary on little more than sixty lines of verse, the *Catalogue of Trojans*" (… τριάκοντα βίβλους συγγράψαι στίχων ἐξήγησιν μικρῷ πλειόνων ἑξήκοντα, τοῦ Καταλόγου τῶν Τρώων).

[32] As, for example, Σ ad. Eur. *Tro*. 47 suggests by demonstrating that Aristophanes of Byzantium suspected *Il*. 20.307 of being an interpolation: ὑπώπτευκε γὰρ Ἀριστοφάνης ἐκ τούτου τὸ 'νῦν δὲ δὴ Αἰνείαο βίη Τρώεσσιν ἀνάξει' (for on account of this Aristophanes suspected the [Iliadic] line 'but now the might of Aeneas will rule over the Trojans'). See Franco 2000, 275.

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